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Author: Syrett, Kristen L. - Rudner, Lawrence M.

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Aside from parts of the "Requirements for Authors" statements that appear in various professional journals, very little has been written about ethical standards for authors in the education field. Topics that have not been addressed include criteria for authorship,

acknowledgments, redundant publication, competing manuscripts, and conflict of interest. The education community can benefit from the debates, experiences, and standards developed by the biomedical research community.

Presented here is a summary of key ethical standards outlined in the "Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals," developed by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Adopted by over 500 scientific and biomedical journals, including the New England Journal of Medicine, Science, and Lancet, these ethical standards are effective guidelines for educational publications.

AUTHORSHIP

All persons listed as authors must have made a substantial intellectual contribution to the overall study and accept public responsibility for it. In other words, the author must give input beyond general supervision or instruction of a research group, have a clear understanding of the methodology and implications of the work, and be able to defend the contribution against academic challenge.

Specifically, individuals identified as authors should have made significant contributions:

- 1) to the conception and design, or analysis and interpretation of data, or both;
- 2) to drafting of the manuscript or revising it critically for intellectual content; and
- 3) on final approval of the version of the manuscript to be published.

All three conditions must be met. Participation solely in the acquisition of funding or the collection of data does not merit authorship status.

In cases where more than one person meets the qualifications for authorship of a manuscript, the order of authorship should be a joint decision of the co-authors. The submission should be accompanied by a form stating that the manuscript has been read and approved by each of the co-authors. By signing this form, the authors verify that the manuscript represents honest work. The co-authors share responsibility and accountability for the results. Deceased persons who meet the criteria for inclusion should be listed, with a footnote reporting the date of death. No fictitious name should appear as an author.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Authors have an obligation to use journal space wisely and efficiently. Including extensive and repetitious lists of acknowledgments is not a good use of journal space and is of little value to the readers of a journal. Unlimited lists undermine the meaning of authorship and the value of an acknowledgment.

REDUNDANT PUBLICATION

Redundant publication is publication of a paper that overlaps substantially with one already published. Manuscripts submitted to a journal are considered for review usually under the conditions that a) the paper is not being reviewed elsewhere and b) the paper has not been previously published. It is generally permissible for an author to submit a manuscript that has been presented at a conference or made available through a document reproduction service, such as ERIC.

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FURTHER READING

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